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USCINCCENT//CCPA, USCENTCOM REAR MACDILL AFB FL
STATE PASS TO AID

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON IRAQ

Summary

-- The Jordanian media over the past few days was overtaken by Jordan's counter-attack to Al-Jazirah's program August 6 that harshly slammed the Jordanian stand vis--vis the Palestinian issue and Iraq and criticized the Hashemite rule for their "pro-Zionist" policies. Newspapers were packed with editorial commentaries strongly criticizing Qatar and Al-Jazirah for their slanderous attempts against the Jordanian stances. Another lead story is the war on Iraq. Majority of commentaries criticize the United States as being "obsessed" with launching a war on Iraq. They also maintain that this war will only serve the U.S. oil interests and the Zionist Lobby interests, and has nothing to do with the war on terrorism or the inspections.

Editorial Commentary

-- "The war is coming"

Daily columnist Musa Hawamdeh writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (08/11): "The war on Iraq is coming for the benefit of the American oil lords and the Zionist Lobby, and in order to keep the United States in the defensive so Americans can forget about the recent financial scandals and the stupid and impulsive nature of the U.S. administration. The war is coming unless it confronts a strong Arab and international opposition and unless Washington comes to the realization that striking Iraq is going to be very costly."

-- "The international opposition to the American war"

Center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (08/11) editorializes: "The growing Arab, regional and European opposition to the American war against Iraq is likely to rein in the drive of the hawks of the Bush administration towards this war. It is also likely to render any American military action void of all moral and legal legitimacy. It will expose the United States as an unjust force with a tendency for dangerous aggressiveness, not only against Iraq but against the rest of the countries of the world."

-- "Invading Iraq has nothing to do with inspectors"

Chief Editor Taher Udwan writes on the back page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (08/11): "The clear fact is that the United States is launching a continuous war against terrorism within the United States and all over the world. The human targets for this war are Arabs first and Muslims second. The battlefield is the land of the Arabs and Muslims. What is now being prepared for Iraq follows that America has already started in Afghanistan and what Israeli continues to do in Palestine. The Americans are looking for a foothold that would justify a military occupation that would eventually become the launching pad for taming the entire Arab region. They have chosen Iraq to be the beginning and the example."

-- "Israel and Iraq's oil"

Daily columnist Raja Issa writes on the back page of semi-official Arabic daily Al-Ra'i (08/12): "As far as the United States is concerned, striking Iraq is important. Iraq is floating on a sea of oil; a weapon used America to rule the world. In addition, and as far as Israel is concerned, Iraq is a threat to its existence. Israel rules America and American cannot disobey Israel. Changing the ruling the regime in Iraq, which is what the United States wants, means

changing this country into a subsidiary to the United States. When Iraq is over, it would be Iran's turn under the pretext that it is being armed by Russia. In reality, all eyes would be on its oil, as well as the fact that Israel wants to rid itself of any dangers to its existence."

-- "The Americans are coming"

Chief editor Taher Udwan writes on the back page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (08/12): "This American obsession with invading Iraq and destroying it is not much different from Sharon's obsession with destroying the Palestinian people. Both the Americans and the Israelis hide behind their policies a deep-rooted hatred for the Arabs, that is nourished by the September 11 attacks and the principles of Zionism that have taken root within the decision-making circles in the United States. The obsession of war and hatred that are being brought by Israel and the United States might be the hurricane that envelops the region. However, this hurricane is going to stop no matter what, but the doors of a long and bitter struggle between the Arabs on one hand and America and Zionism on the other will have been opened for a very long time."

GNEHM